

Favorable action on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted
for Applicant,

By: 

John James McGlew
Registration No. 31,903
McGLEY AND TUTTLE, P.C.

JJM:da
70479.1

Enclosed: Version of Claims Showing Changes

DATED: March 14, 2002
SCARBOROUGH STATION
SCARBOROUGH, NEW YORK 10510-0827
(914) 941-5600

SHOULD ANY OTHER FEE BE REQUIRED, THE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
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McGLEY AND TUTTLE, P.C.
SCARBOROUGH STATION, SCARBOROUGH, NY 10510-0827

BY: Joni Ann Forte DATE: March 14, 2002

Version of Claims Showing Changes

3. (AMENDED) The method according to Claim 1~~{ or 2}~~, in which said identification code is placed on the corresponding container in a machine readable format.

4. (AMENDED) The method according to Claim 1~~{, 2 or 3}~~, in which said identification code is placed on the corresponding container at the time of the production or packaging of the container.

5. (AMENDED) The method according to Claim 1~~{, 2, 3 or 4}~~, in which said patient code is placed on a medium in a machine-readable format.

6. (AMENDED) The method according to Claim~~{s}~~ 3~~{ and 5 at least}~~, in which the combination of the patient code with the identification code is generated by the sequential reading by an automatic reading instrument of the patient code and the identification code, or vice versa.

7. (AMENDED) The method according to ~~{one or more of }~~Claim~~{s}~~ 1~~{ to 6}~~, in which~~{ 10}~~ said patient code and said identification code are reproduced as bar codes and are optically read to produce said combination.

8. (AMENDED) The method according to ~~{one or more of }~~Claim~~{s}~~ 1~~{ to 7}~~, in which said patient code is generated by a central computer of said data processing system; the combination of the patient code with the identification code is carried out by means of a unit of said data processing system other than said central computer; and the result of the analysis, associated with the patient code, is sent to said central computer.

9. (AMENDED) The method according to ~~{one or more of }~~Claim~~{s}~~ 1~~{ to 7}~~, in which said patient code is generated by a central computer of said data processing system; the combination of the patient code with the identification code is carried out by means of a unit of said data processing system other than said central computer; and the result of the analysis, associated with the identification code of the containers, is sent to said central computer, the central computer being programmed to associate with the result of the analysis the data relating to the patient to whom said result relates.

15. (AMENDED) The container according to Claim 13~~{ or 14}~~, characterized in that said identification code is a bar code.

16. (AMENDED) The container according to Claim 13~~{, 14 or 15}~~, characterized in that it includes means for determining an expiry date.

19. (AMENDED) The set of containers according to Claim 17~~{or 18}~~, characterized in that said identification code is a bar code.

20. (AMENDED) The set of containers according to Claim 17~~{, 18 or 19}~~, characterized in that each container is provided with means for determining an expiry date. {